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# CHANGE:

A POEM

PRONOUNCED AT ROXBURY,

OCTOBER VIII, MDCCCXXX,

IN COMMEMORATION

OF THE

FIRST SETTLEMENT OF THAT TOWN.

---

BY THOMAS GRAY, JR. M. D.

*117*

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ROXBURY:

PUBLISHED BY CHARLES P. EMMONS.

J. H. Eastburn....Printer....Boston.

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MDCCCXXX.

450.

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS.—*to wit :*

*District Clerk's Office.*

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the nineteenth day of October, A. D. 1830. in the fifty fifth year of the Independence of the United States of America, CHARLES P. EMMONS, of the said District, has deposited in this Office the Title of a Book, the Right whereof he claims as Proprietor in the words following, *to wit*:

“Change : A Poem pronounced at Roxbury, October **1830**, in commemoration of the First Settlement of that Town, by Thomas Gray, Jr. M. D.

In Conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled “An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts and Books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned :” and also to an Act entitled “An Act supplementary to an Act, entitled, an Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts and Books to the Authors and Proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned ; and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints.”

JNO. W. DAVIS,  
*Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.*

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TOWN OF ROXBURY.

At a meeting of the Citizens of Roxbury, held on the 8th of October 1830, it was *Voted*,—That the Selectmen of the Town be a Committee to wait on Dr. THOMAS GRAY, JR. and in behalf of their fellow-citizens tender him their thanks for his patriotic, elegant, and very appropriate Poem, delivered by him on that day in commemoration of the first settlement of the Town, and request of him a copy for the press.

The Subscribers, Selectmen of Roxbury, in communicating the above vote, would individually express their hopes that the request therein contained will be complied with.

ELIJAH LEWIS,  
B. P. WILLIAMS,  
JONATHAN DORR,  
SAMUEL GUILD,  
JACOB TIDD.

*Roxbury, October 13, 1830.*

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*Boston, October 13, 1830.*

Messrs. ELIJAH LEWIS, B. P. WILLIAMS, JONATHAN DORR,  
SAMUEL GUILD, and JACOB TIDD.

*Gentlemen,*

In acceding to the request of the citizens of my native town, made through you, my only regret is, that the Poem in question, is not more worthy of them and of the occasion.

Permit me, gentlemen, to express through you my deep sense of the honor conferred on me by you, and of the polite manner in which their request is seconded by yourselves.

With sentiments of profound respect to the Selectmen of the town of Roxbury, and to yourselves individually,

I have the honor to be, gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

T. GRAY, JR.

*To the Selectmen of the Town of Roxbury.*



## CHANGE.

---

WHEN opening Spring first decks her sunny bowers  
With snow-white blossoms and with crimson flowers ;  
When weary Sickness turns her sleepless eye,  
With anxious vigils to the eastern sky ;  
When parting Summer flies the flowery vale,  
And Autumn odors perfume every gale ;  
Why does the heart, 'mid sorrow's dull alloy,  
Hail the far shadows of her coming joy ?  
Why the young spirit saddening turn from this,  
To hail a brighter in another bliss ?  
Why at each step on life's rejoicing way  
Bound Youth's wild pulse with more exulting play ?  
Why triumphs Hope o'er Sorrow's darkest hour ?  
Why blooms there still on every thorn a flower ?  
Why o'er life's ills still beams the hoping eye,  
As rainbows brighten o'er a showery sky —  
And each new object to the untutored gaze  
Still dimly point to far yet happier days ?  
'Tis Change — the hope of Change — that bids us stray  
From toil to toil o'er life's untrodden way —  
Unheard the past, her counsels and her fears —  
Unwept the Changes of our flying years ;  
Still sings the syren — still her wiles decoy —  
Still tempts our weakness with illusive joy —  
Deludes to quit, at her inconstant will,  
The certain blessing for th' uncertain ill ;

To seize the moon, or grasp the shooting star—  
 Be any—every thing—but what we are.  
 Attacks the pulpit, school, the law, the arts,  
 Old spinsters' testaments and maidens' hearts ;  
 'Mid courts and camps and men is seen to range  
 And even fair woman has been known to change.

Yes ! the glad tides of life and culture flow  
 Where forests frowned two hundred years ago—  
 Improvement's golden ploughshare has passed o'er,  
 And weeded errors strew the flowery shore.

When first the May-flower on this rock bound strand  
 Sent forth her 'few and faithful' pilgrim band,  
 No friendly foot stood waiting on the shore  
 To bid them 'welcome home,' their wanderings o'er ;  
 To hail with joy the long expected guest  
 From weary wanderings, to delightful rest ;  
 Where trembling joy half doubts her happy lot,  
 Blest even in sorrows, thus to be forgot ;  
 No blazing hearth, no cheering voice of home,  
 No temple's lofty spire nor vaulted dome,  
 No altar-fire, no censer's breath was there,  
 Where rose the pilgrims first deep voice of prayer.  
 But from the roofless rock their praise was poured,  
 Where forests sighed, and answering surges roared.  
 And as their echoing anthem pealed on high,  
 The startled panther howled his fierce reply ;  
 And the grim savage yelled in wild dismay,  
 And paused to wonder, where he came to slay.

But Change soon brightened o'er the forest glade—  
 Light danced on rills that long in darkness played.  
 The good old Puritan in freedom trod  
 The soil that owned no master, but its God.  
 With hymns of praise her slumbering echoes woke ;  
 Bade her free temples rise, her altars smoke—

And freely gleaned, beneath no cloudless clime,  
The treasured spoils of unrecorded Time.

No ! nought on earth this mighty power can mock ;  
And change can smite the shepherd with the flock.  
When our stern fathers of the elder days  
First in these forests pealed their hymns of praise,  
The oft-turned hourglass marked the sermon's length ;  
And when long hours had drained the preacher's strength,  
The godly still were clamorous to be fed  
On the rich pasture and the living bread ;—  
With appetites to cause, though high their praise,  
A moral indigestion now-a-days.  
The pastor *then* his listening flock could steep  
In doctrine sound as now the brethren's sleep ;  
Then lungs and noses no joint requiem poured,  
Nor men preached louder than their hearers snored.  
Yet texts were strung like apples hung to dry ;  
No reason wherefore, and no matter why—  
With things incongruous each discourse was rife,  
And Cain came cheek-by-jowl with Simon's wife.\*  
And misty comments filled the mystic page  
With thoughts, but very little for their age.†

Change entered here—men now the pulpit throng  
As wise, as pious, but not quite—as long.  
Servant of God ! as then, 'tis your's to heal  
The restless woes that wounded spirits feel.  
Yours is the glorious meed of endless bliss—  
Life in the world to come, and peace in this.  
'Mid heaviest trials, anguish, pain and loss,  
Ye wear his livery, and must bear his cross.

\* Alluding to an account of an old discourse for which since writing the above I have sought in vain, in which the object of the preacher, from the words "Now Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever" was to prove that Simon was a married man.

† This sword a dagger had t' his page  
That was but little for his age. *Hudibras.*

"Tis yours to search the sorrows of the mind ;  
 The tear to dry, the broken heart to bind—  
 With high commission through the world to roam,  
 And bring each wanderer to his father's home—  
 To lead the flock where living pastures grow,  
 And the deep waters of salvation flow.  
 And when the race is run—when life is past,  
 And tired ye sink to dreamless sleep at last,  
 Bright angel bands shall guard the grassy sod,  
 And track your footsteps to the home of God.  
 On the pure brow celestial light shall pour,  
 With glory's crown, and life forevermore.

Years glide along—in silent swiftness plays  
 The Change that steals away our flying days.  
 But sadness lingered now where joy had been,  
 And grief hung dark'ning o'er each sunbright scene.  
 Then shrunk the flowers on Freedom's fairy tree,  
 And drooped thy lofty genius, Liberty.  
 Long did'st thou weep unheeded and alone,  
 And mourned like Memnon\* as each sun went down ;—  
 Ay ! wept—till grief to indignation turned—  
 And strong and bright within, thy spirit burned.

And then another Change came o'er the land,  
 Where iron power had urged her stern command.  
 Where bristling bayonets gleamed from north to south,  
 And laws were uttered from the cannon's mouth ;  
 Doomed soon to sink beneath a crimson flood,  
 And unlike Draco's, be *effaced* in blood.

Then burst around the dark oppressor's path  
 The earthquake power of Freedom's fearful wrath.  
 The timid wife forgot her fond alarms ;  
 The sister girded on the brother's arms ;

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\* Perhaps it may be esteemed rather too bold a figure, thus to identify the statue with the man, if so, I can but plead guilty.

The daughter braced the father's glittering sword ;  
 Nor Beauty bent to him, the well adored ;  
 But blushing warned him, as he grasped the gun,  
 That ere herself, must Liberty be won.  
 Through every breast the moral tempest moved,  
 Nor ev'n the mother spared the child she loved.  
 " Go forth " she said, " obey the voice divine ;  
 Thy country calls in deeper tones than mine.  
 Strike in *her* cause while Heaven has power to save—  
 Thy hand a weapon, or the earth—a grave.  
 In life's red tide must peasant hands be steeped—  
 Your fields unwatered, and your grain unreaped ;—  
 Those fields must drip beneath a crimson flood,  
 Be sowed in battle, and be reaped in blood.  
 Then mid that fiery tempest fix thine eye  
 Where Freedom's beacon blazes in the sky ;  
 For her thy life, thy blood, like water pour—  
 Return in victory—or return no more—  
 And bid yon starry banner glorious wave  
 Above thy triumph—or upon thy grave."

Then dropped the sickle from the reaper's hand—  
 The scythe lay idle on the unmowed land—  
 The plough stood midway in its furrow drawn—  
 Unreaped the harvest, and unsowed the corn.  
 The sturdy peasant dropped the useless spade,  
 To grasp the musket and to wield the blade—  
 And swore as flashed its sheathless edge on high  
 To live in freedom or for freedom die.

Then Freedom first her sunbright flag unfurled,  
 And spake in thunder to a wondering world.  
 Roused from her slumbers bade the earth rejoice ;  
 Reared her proud form, and uttered forth her voice.  
 Then snapt in twain Oppression's iron rod,  
 And man walked forth the image of his God.  
 Then, tyrants, passed away your sceptre, then  
 Ye felt the might of those who dared be—men.

'Then rose the first libations of the free—  
 Then thy best holiest altar, Liberty ;—  
 And Change stalked forth from 'neath oppression's rod,  
 The scourge of tyrants, and the friend of God.

And education too obeys thy power  
 With systems changing with each changing hour ;  
 Now, children cull each flower from brambles freed,  
 And learn each science ere they learn to read.  
 Now mathematics marries poetry,  
 And set to music is the A. B. C. \*  
 While moral railways through each science glide,  
 And mental steamboats laugh at wind and tide ;  
 Extremes forever still extremes will breed,  
 And to too little, will too much succeed.

Once Learning floated on a starless sea,  
 And each fair flower adorned a thorny tree.  
 Then the glad schoolboy sprang with joy alert  
 From rods and tasks to wallowing in the dirt ;  
 And clouds of darkness, spite of grammar's laws,  
 O'erspread at once his accent and his *paws*.  
 No matter though even common sense he lack ;  
 What if he had no brain ? he had a back—  
 And oft 'twas drummed—and well our sires can tell  
 How Learning entered where the cow-skin fell—  
 How proved each stripe across his back that flew,  
 A sluice, where Knowledge ran in gutters through.

Then Learning's altars flamed with genial birch,  
 And tingling ribs proclaimed how keen its search ;  
 And wit and wisdom found their straightest track  
 Up to the brain by travelling through the back—  
 Just as the woodman makes his axe descend  
 Its handle best, by thumping t'other end ;—  
 And still their course they well knew how to strew  
 With bumps that Gall and Spurzheim never knew.

Lo ! where with reckless footstep Change has trod  
 Even in the porchway of the house of God.  
 There Pride in vain commissioned virtue probes,  
 Where Fashion tricks her in Religion's robes.  
 There swelling Vanity her tribute seeks  
 For new made dresses, and for rosy cheeks ;  
 And Beauty deems, to judge by deeds alone,  
 The eye of Heaven less piercing than her own.  
 There boys and girls in twelve year wisdom sage  
 The learned critics of this learned age  
 Decide the preacher's merits for papa  
 At once the wonder of the town and 'ma.  
 There literary dandies weekly stray,  
 Not for what Heaven, but what the preachers say.  
 Whose ear an uncouth accent cannot bear,  
 Even though Jehovah speak in thunder there ;  
 Whose dainty spirits but on flowers can rise,  
 And roll in rounded periods to the skies.  
 There pious females cluster round the door,  
 To scan the preacher, modes and sermon o'er.  
 " La ! what a beautiful discourse and eye—  
 Dear me ! how eloquent ! how black ! oh, my !"  
 There half-day saints with Heaven hard bargains drive,  
 How to gain most at least expense, who strive—  
 Who keep an open ledger book with Heaven,  
 And debit half a day, to credit seven ;  
 Yet swindle in the entry, which *should* bear,  
 Not that they prayed, but slept at heaven, while there.  
 There weary Indolence is weekly blest,  
 With dreamy slumbers and unbroken rest,  
 Unless pereliance from mid the various crowd,  
 Some noisy neighbour chance to sleep—too loud.

Oh, glorious Change ! why lingerest thou afar !  
 Why stay the wheels of thy triumphal car !  
 Come in thy power—to triumph and restore—  
 On a dark world celestial light to pour ;

Bid wayward man each restless conflict cease,  
 Heal every wound, and soothe each pang to peace.  
 Bid Faith float brightning o'er this life's dark tide ;—  
 The lamb crouch harmless at the leopard's side ;—  
 Shed down on earth the dawn of heavenly bliss,  
 And pour from other worlds, a light on this—  
 With awful reverence and submissive fear,  
 Teach man to bow and feel that God is here.  
 Come in thy triumph—let the nations know  
 The power where kings must bend, where conquerors bow  
 Bear down each wrong—each right to guard be just—  
 Crush every vice and folly in the dust,  
 And bigotry with error's gloom replete,  
 And trample worthless systems at thy feet.  
 Where Learning's torch but gleams with feeble ray,  
 Pour the full blaze of Truth's resplendent day ;  
 Beneath thy chariot wheels bid Falsehood lie,  
 And Ignorance, chained beneath thy axle die—  
 There bid the victor's blood stained laurels fall,  
 Thyself the noblest conqueror of them all.

Lo ! where thy power dread Change, we sorrowing see  
 Sweep the fair portion of the Cherokee,  
 Its chartered lord by nature, treaty, law—  
 The savage once—the savage now no more.

See where yon aged warrior seeks relief  
 Beneath the burden of his manly grief ;  
 And as the child by threatening danger prest  
 Flies to the shelter of a parent's breast,  
 There hides its head, and soothes its wild alarms,  
 And weeps its sorrows in its mother's arms,  
 So in the bosom of the land he loves,  
 With musing step and aching heart he roves.  
 In the still forest, by the streamlet's side,  
 Unseen he weeps his sorrow's bitter tide ;  
 And while his soul's deep fountains gushing flow,  
 He thus pours forth his anguish and his woe :

And *must* I leave ye, lone and lovely bowers,  
 Where flew on lightning wings the joyous hours !  
 How does this spirit kindle as I gaze  
 On each dear relic of departed days !  
 The forest archway, and the tangled glade,  
 The rippling waters, and the freshening shade,  
 The drooping elm-tree, and the murmuring pine,  
 The leafy thicket and the cultured vine —  
 Soon must we leave ye, oh ! too soon deplore  
 The joy so deeply ours — soon ours no more.  
 Yon tree which tales of whispering love could tell,  
 Now sadly sighing to my last farewell,  
 The fountain sparkling in the sunny glade,  
 Where old age counselled and where childhood played,  
 The ivy mantling yonder broken wall,  
 My hope, my home, my country, and my all,  
 How could I live and leave ye ! — how could bear  
 To wear out life and want thy vital air !  
 Go forth from thee, an exile and alone,  
 My loved, my lost, my beautiful, my own !  
 How could I bear, in speechless sorrow mute  
 To see the stranger's foot thy soil pollute,  
 While faithless tyrants mock at broken trust,  
 Stand coldly by, nor smite them to the dust ;  
 Stand coldly by ye and unmurmuring see  
 Our altars torn,\* yet sacred, God, to thee !  
 Why should I quit the ashes of my sires ;  
 Is not the son's place where the sire expires ?  
 I will not leave thee — where my fathers lie,  
 I'll seek thy shelter — in thy bosom die.  
 No foreign earth shall hold the red man's grave —  
 No foreign rank grass o'er this head shall wave —  
 But to thy sacred dust thy child shall come,  
 Sleep in thy arms, and find a peaceful home ;

\* "They," (the Cherokees) "now have, in addition to their schools, a regular civil government, and *places of regular Christian worship.*" v. Essays of Wm. Penn.

'There rest secure, though storms and tempests lower,  
Where men and tyrants have no farther power.

And thou my child, by heavy grief o'erborne,  
How wilt thou bear thee when thy father's gone,  
Whose eye on thee hath never aught but smiled—  
Who *then* shall shield thy innocence, my child,  
When left alone on life's uncertain way,  
To evil tongues and evil men a prey ?  
Then guard thy heart, and check each wayward sigh ;  
Watch every wandering with a jealous eye ;  
Firm be thy trusting faith as rocks endure—  
And pure thy hope in heaven, as heaven is pure.  
And thou, my foolish heart, be still ! nor more  
Thy ravished home, thy perished joy deplore ;—  
For not unheard will Truth to Heaven complain,  
Nor Mercy plead for Innocence in vain.

Yet wilt thou love the more than Fortune gave,  
Thy mother's memory, and thy father's grave—  
And from each grave by stranger footsteps trod,  
Shall rise one deep appeal to heaven and God.

How should *I* bear to raise thy drooping head,  
And weep and watch around thy feverish bed !  
How should *I* bear a stranger land to see,  
Deprived of home, of country, and of thee !  
When not one sad memorial shall remain—  
Not even thy answering look of love again.  
How should *I* bear—my child, my country low,  
All of life's scorn, and more than all its woe ;  
And calmly, coldly, turn me to depart,  
With tearless sorrow—and a breaking heart.

Yet must I learn unmoved our foes to see—  
To pray for them—but most of all for thee.  
And ere this throbbing heart shall cease to live,  
To breathe to heaven that hardest prayer—“forgive.”

Yes, Righteous God ! avert thy dreadful curse,  
And spare our murderers, as they spared not us.

Thou hast thy changes, Fashion, and to thee  
The multitude doth bow the lowly knee.  
How shift the varying wonders of the day !  
How change to change and whim to whim gives way !  
Swift as the breeze, the changing topics sweep  
From Jackson linen to merino sheep—  
From the French dancers to the Boston flats—  
From Brighton hogs, to Navarino hats ;  
Whose bulk capacious and whose breadth before  
Forbid to enter at a common door—  
Whose wearer must, should luckless gales arise,  
Be wasted like Elijah to the skies.  
Who hath not paused, astonished and amazed,  
And long in silence on the portent gazed ;  
And mused, and wondered that so large a space  
Should hold in all its bulk but one small face ?

Once hoops swelled stately from the fair one's side,  
And rows of ruffs stood forth in well-starched pride,  
And spangles glittered o'er like drops of rain,  
And pages bore behind the flowing train ;  
Like those strange sheep veracious travellers find,  
Who drag their tails on carriages behind.\*

With rapid course the speeding fashions fly,  
As clouds drive fleetly o'er a wintry sky ;  
And Beauty takes, at her all varying call,  
Each Proteus form, and triumphs in them all.  
Now sprinkled o'er with flowers and ribbons gay,  
As if some green-house bed had walked away—

\* For an account of these Turkish sheep "whose tails are encumbered with an *incredible* load of fat" (which is used by the Turks for butter) which tails "weigh 20, 30, and often 40 lbs," and are therefore supported "on two wheeled charriages contrived for the purpose" to which the animal is harnessed, see A. Hill's *present state of Aethiopia, Egypt* &c.

Anon as simply and as straightly draped,  
 As if all Egypt's mummies had escaped—  
 Now, arms, and waists and borders puffed about,  
 Like flying frigates with all canvass out—  
 Now, bishop's sleeves blow round the fair one's head,  
 Like prints of cherubs with both wings outspread—  
 Now, ears of elephants all dangling throng,  
 Devised by ears less broad, but quite as long—  
 While forth in pantalettes fair beauty flocks,  
 Like little men, disguised in cartmen's frocks.

And you, ye fair, think not we mean to press  
 Hard on your high prerogative of dress ;  
 Nor think we ridicule your sacred rights,  
 And deem us therefore but uncourteous knights ;  
 But as men jest at force of civil sway,  
 And mock at power they know they *must* obey.  
 So smiling, trembling, at your shrine we fall,  
 And own your power, ay ! pantalettes and all.

And Age hath many changes, and he brings  
 A long lost record of forgotten things ;  
 Of well-wept errors—of repented strife,  
 By memory blotted from the book of life ;  
 Of days departed and of sorrows fled—  
 Of friends long honored, and of joys long dead.

Who would not be the comet of a day,  
 To blaze and dazzle o'er men's wondering way,  
 Rather than gleam forever from afar,  
 The twinkling ray of some unnoticed star ?  
 Ours be the brief and glorious—one short hour  
 Of useful life, is worth to Virtue's power,  
 An age of talents rusting to decay,  
 Or centuries dreamed in idleness away.

And Death too hath *his* changes ; and he flings  
 A solemn shadow o'er life's brilliant things ;

When one by one companions drop away,  
 As melt the snow-flakes on a wintry day ;  
 Falls from life's rosy chaplet flower by flower—  
 And fades Hope's golden moonlight hour by hour ;  
 And Life, exhausted at her fountain springs,  
 Clasps like the tired bird her weary wings—  
 When the dimmed soul, long waning to her last,  
 On earth's last confine calls back all the past ;  
 Mid that bright hour, her radiant wings unfurls,  
 And beams on this, with light from other worlds ;  
 With shadowy grandeur borrowed from on high,  
 Looks out in life's last, solemn majesty—  
 Leans forth with searching eye to pierce the gloom,  
 And read on earth the secrets of the tomb.  
 Ay ! burns to pierce the midnight darkness spread  
 Around the mysteries of the unknown dead,  
 We may not know ; till Death the conqueror call,  
 And life's last, greatest Change, shall teach them all.

Thank Heaven, not ours the land where titled great  
 Who 've lived in infamy, may rot in state ;  
 Where fifty tons of fretted marble groan  
 Beneath the weight of scarce twelve pounds of bone,  
 And 'lying epitaphs' above the spot  
 Define precisely all that they were not.  
 As English travellers our country view,  
 Then publish every thing—except what 's true.

Enough of travelled dandies *here* we meet,  
 Their ignorance who 've bartered for conceit ;  
 On all that smacks of home who boldly frown—  
 To prove their candor, run their country down ;  
 Who 've planted ignorance, and reaped alone,  
 All Europe's follies added to their own—  
 Who 've learned, so genius sometimes deigns to stoop,  
 The mode for waistcoats, and the herbs for soup ;

Who chide our climate till one would suppose  
 That *there*, heaven sent such weather as *they* chose.  
 Whate'er your subject, always prompt to laud  
 Some object that they, *should have seen*, abroad—  
 At our own authors, preachers, beauties, skies,  
 Shake their light pates, and look profoundly wise.  
 And thus it is—still dunce to dunce succeeds,  
 And one fool follows where another leads.

Yet have we holy men of every creed,  
 In virtue's cause still eloquent to plead;  
 With holy fervor, pious zeal, who preach,  
 And live the sacred doctrines that they teach—  
 Where learning, eloquence and worth conspire,  
 The apostle's wisdom, and the prophet's fire ;  
 And sunsets too, whose glorious, gorgeous dyes,  
 Were never matched beneath Italian skies.  
 I would not give our rocks, our hard wrought sand,  
 For isles of gold, Arabia's spicy land,  
 Nor one bright spot where Freedom's sun has shone,  
 For all the chains and bayonets of a throne.

And not in vain dawned learning's brighter day,  
 And heaven eyed Science held her golden sway ;  
 Explored each mine, and braved each rugged steep,  
 Searched every land, and sounded every deep ;  
 Change enters but destroys not—brighter grows  
 The light from learning's torch that gladdening flows—  
 Some weeds will still each nobler science choak,  
 As ivy twines round the manly oak.  
 Lo ! Galileo, in a dungeon bound,  
 Because he dared believe the earth turned round—  
 And the wise sage who marked the planets laws,  
 A demi-martyr in fair learning's cause.

'Tis mystery still the vulgar mind has fed—  
 For this the Pythian spoke, the Athenian bled ;—

In every art change bears a mixed alloy—  
 At times for evil, and at times for joy ;  
 And still in every age and every land  
 Men most admire where least they understand.

The bold empiric rears his shameless head  
 Where scarce ev'n Heaven's archangels dare to tread.  
 Where skill's and learning's high apostles pause,  
 He fears no danger, who knows not its cause ;  
 As skilless sailors sometimes safely sweep  
 Where wisdom dares not tempt the shoaly deep.  
 Death grins in vials, shoots in patent pills,  
 And mortal med'cines cure all mortal ills.

The pulpit too might sometimes blush to bear  
 The holy mimics who exhibit there,  
 When reverend actors deign the desk to thump,  
 Who well might change the pulpit for the pump.

The brawling pettifogger warps the law  
 To make all tangled that was plain before ;  
 With hopeless gloom girds every cause about,  
 And shuts each lingering ray of reason out—  
 While every hour but makes the darkness worse,  
 And nought grows lighter—but the client's purse—  
 Law's scavengers—in each good thing inert ;  
 And skilled alone to sweep up learning's dirt.  
 For gold, Béelzebub their lord would own,  
 And plead for Moloch before Satan's throne.

With other hearts and other eyes we scan  
 The upright lawyer and the honest man.  
 And one there was\* whose worth might well inspire  
 A nobler requiem, and a lostier lyre.  
 Whose memory well might grace the poet's line,  
 Nor pass unhonored, though by lips like mine.

Where the pale willow droops her pensive bough,  
 And whispering cypress rears his funeral brow,  
 Through whose dark branches, that the ivy binds,  
 Breathes the deep diapason of the winds.  
 At lingering twilight's solemn thoughtful hour,  
 When freshening fragrance scents the dew-bright flower,  
 When thought comes glowing o'er that sacred sod,  
 As came the Hebrew from the mount of God ;  
 When busy memory, tracking scenes long fled,  
 Holds high communion with the viewless dead,  
 The loved, the lost, the yearnings, and the tears,  
 The deep memorials of departed years  
 Graved in man's restless heart—when these arise,  
 And point like "angel-beacons" to the skies,  
 Then—there—shall memory long recall thy worth,  
 Now blest in other worlds, though lost on earth.  
 There faithful Friendship, and remembering love,  
 And filial reverence, oft at eve shall rove ;  
 There Want relieved shall bless its happier lot,  
 And weeping Gratitude bedew the spot ;  
 And pause, and wonder mid its aching grief,  
 That days so useful, should have been so brief.

Life ! oh, it is not by a length of days,  
 That passed unhonored and that left no praise.  
 'Tis not the crowded days of many years,  
 Unmarked by blessings, honored by no tears,  
 That flew as idly as the sumner's wind,  
 But left like that no breezy health behind ;  
 That shed no rosy freshness on the bower,  
 Rain to the plant, nor dewdrop to the flower,  
 That trod unheeding o'er life's narrow way,  
 In coldness wrapt, to sordid self a prey ;  
 Oh ! this is not long life—But he whose name  
 Shines in the mantling light of Mercy's flame,  
 Whose generous deeds, like freshening odors, spread,  
 Breathed from the musk-rose and the violet's bed,

While Charity, whose noiseless foot has trod  
 Unheard within and known but to his God,  
 Pours her refreshing streams with power to save,  
 As unseen breezes, travel o'er the wave ;  
 And like the angel who to Siloam flew,  
 Move the still waters and refresh them too ;  
 And onward, homeward, upward, as she springs,  
 Still scatters joy and healing from her wings ;  
 Whose ready aids on others woes attend ;  
 The poor man's patron, and the good man's friend,  
 Whose noblest honor is the meed of praise,  
 The bright memorial of departed days :  
 Who rocks the lid of waking Want to sleep,  
 And bids the mourning sufferer cease to weep ;  
 And as the flower on its supporting stem,  
 Turns to the sunbeam still her dewy gem,  
 And meekly, freely through the sunbright day  
 Yields her rich odors to his kindling ray,  
 So he—by deeds of generous kindness known,  
 Still *turns* to man, but *leans* on God alone.  
 This is long life with crowded Virtues blest—  
 He lives the longest, who has lived the best.

Yes ! on this native spot of native land  
 Doth Change extend her all supreme command.  
 Now, raises churches at each others door—  
 Now, builds up streets where nothing stood before—  
 Now, stirs the living, now walls up the dead—  
 Now, moves an engine house, and builds a shed—  
 Now, lays out princely roads with skill and pains,  
 And then to make them, blows out rocks and brains—  
 Anon to raise our good old mother's rank,  
 She waves her wand, and lo ! a bustling bank.  
 Now first from hence bids hourly coaches glide,  
 Each thirty minutes to the hour that ride ;  
 Assemblies meet, and festive bands carouse,  
 Where six years since who dreamed of Norfolk House ?

Academies and carpet factories rise,  
And Ladies' Fairs astound the wondering eyes.  
New modes occur to raise the parish tax ;  
New steeples grow upon old churches backs,  
And last not least the stubborn soil, wrought o'er,  
Bears two spires now, that bore but one before.

Dost doubt it? View our busy farmyards through ;  
Our well-tilled fields, and happy firesides view.  
The skilful husbandman with care and toil  
From earth's rich bosom gathering home the spoil  
Not the low serf of Europe's vassal plan,  
But the enlightened, wise and happy man.  
Who hath not circled round that cheerful hearth,  
Where calm content to golden hours gave birth ?  
Who hath not marked, beneath that skilful hand,  
How teems with earth's rich fruits the smiling land ?  
Now nurturing sun, now fostering dews are given,  
Shed from the crystal urns of yonder heaven.

True, times have greatly changed, since Tityrus played  
The tuneful reed beneath the beech-tree's shade ;  
When Palæmon, his flock around to keep,  
Sung Latin eclogues to admiring sheep ;  
Or Melibœus' graver mind preferred  
The calm attention of the thoughtful herd .  
And found a more attentive, listening crew,  
Than modern poets very often do—  
And while they gravely chewed the cud, no doubt  
Their oxen wondered what they were about.  
Alternate songs and pipes beneath the shade  
Enamored shepherds to their cattle played.  
Those times are passed—and with our Roxbury swains,  
Alternate kicks and sticks succeed to strains.  
Stern Change assailed the beasts—at learning's fall,  
Dead to all tongues but one expressive call.  
No swain now sings beneath the spreading tree,  
To birds and streams, that sing as loud as he—

The herdsman's song the cows remember not,  
And all the sheep their Latin have forgot.

Yet at the sacred hour of daylight's close  
Turns weary labor to his sweet repose ;  
His smiling partner, and home's social glee,  
And clustering children clambering round his knee—  
With thousand things to tell—to show—to ask—  
Some novel picture-book, some well conned task—  
While grandmama with spectacles on nose,  
And upraised finger, checks if wrong he goes ;  
While smiling sits the patient mother by  
Enjoying all, with all a mother's eye ;  
And when thanksgiving fires all cheerful blaze,  
Goes back with childhood's glee, to childhood's days—  
Romps with his children in their gambols rough ;  
Rolls on the floor in annual blind-man's-buff.  
Health gilds each brow, each scene can rapture win,  
Content without, and Innocence within.  
No weary *ennui* breaks *their* peaceful rest,  
No *gim* dyspepsia racks *their* joyous breast,  
That heaviest, deadliest toil to man below,  
The toil for pleasure, 'tis not theirs to know.  
There, daily peace attends each day's employ ;  
Each rest from labor, is an hour for joy.  
These teach the infant saplings as they rise,  
Like them to point their branches to the skies ;  
Mark out the path their virtuous fathers trod,  
“ And point through nature's works to nature's God”—  
These are *our* nobles—on our chartered plan,  
Kings have not written “ lord,” but God has—“ man,”  
His noblest work, by nobles unsurpassed—  
The mould where God's nobility are cast.  
These are *our* jewels—these the noble powers  
We proudly claim, emphatically *ours*.

And here one feeble tribute let me pay  
To one whose name will never pass away.

The good, the pious—in the early days  
 Who planted here his noble palm\* of praise ;  
 Who justly bore “ the apostle’s ”\* sacred name,  
 And won from Virtue’s self, a virtuous fame.  
 Who “ to the Indian and the negro ”† bore  
 Learning’s free gift, and opened wide her door.  
 Who from this pulpit, spread His praise abroad,  
 And reared his temples‡ to the living God.  
 To him man’s holiest peace and joy were given—  
 Here, quiet conscience—there, approving heaven.

And what, my country, what shall be thy fate  
 When next this day our children celebrate ?  
 When unborn voices hail its dawn again,  
 But not one tongue of ours repeats the strain ?  
 When o’er our sleeping heads the rank grass waves ?  
 And wild flowers bloom o’er our forgotten graves ?  
 One only wish I breathe for what may be—  
 One prayer address, Eternal One ! to thee.  
 Here and forever may fair Freedom roam,  
 Here her high altar, and her holiest home—  
 Here, should Oppression ever dare to tread,  
 Should star and stripe ’gainst star and stripe be spread,  
 May every heart and every hand awake ;  
 The first for Thine and both for Mercy’s sake.  
 Be Thou their shield—theirs, Thy tremendous power—  
 Their fiery pillar through that midnight hour,  
 To marshal them the way Thyself first gave  
 To a free country or a freer grave.

But if Thy wisdom mark a darker doom,  
 If Freedom’s cradle *must* become her tomb—  
 At every rampart may her faithful band  
 Fight for each step, and perish where they stand

\*The Reverend John Eliot “ the Apostle.”

†Eliot’s School was endowed by him “ for the use of the Indians and Negroes on Jamaica Plain so called. ”

‡ See Lempriere’s Universal Biography.

Still with their dying hands her banners wave,  
 And her last bulwark be her glorious grave—  
 Here may the last proud phalanx of the free  
 Fall like the Spartans at Thermopyle ;  
 Their latest look on Freedom's latest sun—  
 And if but one survive that hour—but one—  
 Be this inscription written on his grave—  
 'He lived a coward and he died a slave.'

Eternal Truth ! thy records are on high.  
 No twilight shadow dims thy glorious sky—  
 Eternal peace before thine altar bends—  
 Eternal life thy heavenward path attends.  
 No shadow mingles there—no dull alloy  
 Dims the full brightness of thy perfect joy.  
 To thee alone with trusting Faith 'tis given  
 O'er veiled to visit earth yet dwell in heaven.  
 Unchanged—unchangeable thy steadfast ray,  
 Though kingdoms wane, and systems pass away ;  
 And they *shall* pass—and when this scene is o'er,  
 When all that is and shall be, is no more ;  
 When wandering stars in wild confusion fly,  
 Wrapt in the cerement of yon funeral sky ;  
 When Hope from earth has fled dismayed at last,  
 And Heaven's last trumpet peals the judgment blast,  
 Untouched by Change thou'l wave thy torch abroad,  
 With blaze enkindled at the throne of God.

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